



Section 3.0

The Public Visioning Process

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As part of the design and planning process, a series of public meetings, stakeholder interviews, design workshops, and public presentations were conducted to uncover key issues and gather public input.

This process included:

Public Kick-Off Meeting: October 25, 2007

This meeting included a brief presentation of the planning process and two exercises designed to gather public ideas and input. The first was a “post it” note exercise where meeting attendees were asked to write 3 things they “value” most about the area and 3 things they would like to see “changed”. The ideas could be broad or specific. These notes were then placed on the wall and grouped into common categories in order to uncover common themes.

The second exercise involved working in small “table groups” around aerial maps of the study area. Participants were asked to mark up the base maps and identify geographically, areas needing change or improvement and areas to be enhanced or protected. Similar to the first exercise, this one serves to locate specific project needs and concerns in the corridor. Each table then presented back to the larger group the ideas and concepts discussed in their table session.



Participants in the October 25th Kick-off Meeting



Community ideas and comments organized as “post it” notes



Community members organizing “post it” notes

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Post-it Notes Exercise

Broad Categories of things that the community values

Trees and Open Space (41)
Local Business / Neighborhood Retail (38)
Good access to Downtown (33)
Historic Character and Diversity (30)
Sense of Community (25)
Walkability (18)

Broad categories of things the community would like to see changed

Traffic and Transportation Issues (64) (Truck traffic, traffic operations, speed)
Redevelopment / Code Enforcement (63)
Bike / Ped and Transit (56)
Character of Businesses and Streets (40)
Street infrastructure (25)

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of "post-it notes" related to the same issue

Key comments for the top three issues from the "Values" and "Change" exercise are reproduced below.

Things they value

Trees / Green Space

- Brownwood Park, existing trees
- Clean and healthy environment
- Greenspace and community garden areas

Local Business / Neighborhood Retail

- Starlight Drive-In Cinema
- Residential feel with shopping on the edges
- Little Azio / Ormewood square shopping area
- Variety of shopping - not chain stores

Good Access to Downtown

- Proximity to downtown / airport
- Key transportation artery
- Ease of access to interstates and local destinations

Things they would like to see changed

Redevelopment / Code Enforcement

- Redevelop dilapidated, vacant properties, salvage yards and junk yards
- Regulate adult businesses and liquor stores
- Regulate billboards and signage
- Lesser numbers of auto stores, strip malls
- Reuse of the Land fill

Traffic and Transportation Issues

- Add turn Lanes
- Synchronize the traffic lights
- Enforce speed limits
- Traffic congestion at Moreland Avenue and I-20
- Manage access to fast food restaurants
- Redirect / Remove / Manage Truck traffic

Bike / Pedestrian & Transit Related Issues

- Need better mass transit options
- Make room for bikes (Bike Lanes / wider lanes)
- Install / repair / improve sidewalks
- Make it aesthetically pleasing to walk on Moreland Avenue (landscaping / street trees)
- Better / more frequent crosswalks on Moreland Avenue

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Stakeholder Interviews: October 2007

Following the Public Kick-Off Meeting a series of one-on-one stakeholder interviews were conducted to gain more specific input on key issues in the area. These interviews included the Atlanta Housing Authority, GDOT, DeKalb County staff, neighborhood leaders, and property owners. They were informal discussions that were used to identify current initiatives and trends in the corridor.

Design Workshop: December 11-13, 2007

The Design Workshop was organized as a series of meetings, presentations, stakeholder interviews, and team working sessions all scheduled over a three day period. The purpose of the workshop was to develop and design an initial set of concepts that could be quickly shared with the public and form the foundation of the plan.

The workshop included a public kick-off meeting on the first evening. Held at Mt. Nebo Baptist Church with many new to the planning process, this meeting served a similar purpose as the first kick-off meeting in October. Participants were asked to work in small table groups around aerial base maps and identify key issues, areas of concern, improvement opportunities.

The following three days were scheduled as day-long open house work sessions where the project team set up a working studio and began designing and developing proposed projects in an environment where the public could drop in and share ideas and review work in progress. The evening of the third day concluded with a public overview presentation of the designs and planning ideas developed during the week. Over 150 people participated throughout the course of the design workshop.



Design Charrette Kick-off at the Mt. Nebo Baptist Church



Community members discussing ideas in small groups



Table session leaders presenting ideas to the public

Table Session Comments

Traffic and Transportation Issues

- Would like to see better continuity in character of Moreland Avenue
- Moreland & I-20 interchange is dangerous for motorists, peds and bikes
- Inconsistent road width along Moreland
- Truck traffic is dangerous
- Realign dog-leg intersections
- Optimize / synchronize signal timing
- Provide traffic signals for traffic calming and pedestrian crossings

Redevelopment Issues

- Enhance and protect residential neighborhoods
- Redevelop vacant and rundown properties
- Rezone industrial uses to more community oriented uses
- Encourage diversity of retail and office space as a part of mixed use development
- Lessen the public housing concentration to the south of Moreland Avenue
- Keep the Starlight Drive-in Theatre

Open Space, Greenspace and Trails

- Need more greenspace and parks along Moreland Avenue
- Use the power line easement for a multi-use trail
- Develop parks / trails along floodplain of Entrenchment creek
- Connect existing parks to potential new ones
- Explore urban agriculture opportunities with new development

Bike and Pedestrian Safety / Walkability

- Want bike lanes on or parallel to Moreland Avenue
- Need better sidewalks and street trees with street furniture
- Screen the trucking businesses with street trees
- More opportunities for safe pedestrian crossings on Moreland Avenue
- Use traffic calming measures for pedestrian safety on Moreland and adjacent neighborhoods

Project Goals

The public input and existing condition analysis served to structure a set of project goals used to guide the development of the plan.

1. Make Moreland Pedestrian Friendly

- Better sidewalks, street trees & landscape buffers
- Safe and Accessible Pedestrian Crossings
- Eliminate/Reduce Truck Traffic
- Realign Glenwood & Skyhaven Intersections
- Make I-20 Interchange Less of a Pedestrian Barrier

2. Enhance Pedestrian & Bicycle Connectivity

- Bike Lanes on or Parallel to Moreland Avenue
- New Trail/Greenway Connections
- New Sidewalks in Neighborhoods
- Neighborhood Traffic Calming

3. Support Pedestrian Friendly Urban Form

- Regulate Building Form and Placement to Support Pedestrian Friendly Environment
- Regulate Site Design to Promote Connectivity
- Enhance Streetscape Standards for Private Development
- Implement Design Standards

4. Promote Mixed-Use Redevelopment

- Promote Neighborhood Serving Commercial Uses
- Promote a Range of Housing Type (mix of income)
- Design with Appropriate Height and Density to Neighborhood
- Redevelopment and Revitalize Underutilized Areas

5. Enhance Transit Service

- Improve and Consolidate Transit Shelters and Stops
- Manage and Reorganize Bus Routes to Improve Service (shorter headways)
- Plan for Future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in the Moreland Corridor